

Over 400 workers go on strike at Nano plant in Gujarat

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SANAND (GUJARAT): Over 400 workers went on a strike at Tata Motors' Nano plant here on Monday night, demanding reinstatement of 28 colleagues suspended on disciplinary grounds.

"Two months back, Tata Motors' management suspended two workers on disciplinary grounds. At that time too, the workers had gone on a strike. But a compromise was reached that the management will conduct an inquiry into the matter within one month and submit a report," said assistant labour commissioner (Ahmedabad) M S Patel, who is mediating between the workers and the management.

"It was decided that out of the two suspended, one would be taken back while the other will face action as per the report," Patel said, adding that since the inquiry report did not come in two months, the workers went on strike on Monday night.

According to the company's management, the striking workers went on a rampage and damaged around 50 cars. This forced the management to suspend another 26 workers. The workers are now demanding that all 28 suspended workers be reinstated. "The management is saying that only after an inquiry the suspended workers will be taken back," said Patel.

Around 2,200 workers are employed at the plant, which was shifted from West Bengal following protests over land acquisition

to Gujarat that is known for its trouble-free labour. There is no union at the plant. The striking workers have formed a seven-member committee to negotiate with the management, which has termed the strike illegal.

"There have been continued agitations for monetary increases as well as protests over disciplinary actions against those provoking the workmen, resulting in serious threat to company personnel as well as losses due to tampering," said a Tata spokesperson. Cops were deployed at the plant on Tuesday to prevent violence as workers were likely to continue the strike on Wednesday too even as their talks with the management were on.

The production at the plant has dropped considerably since its launch in July 2009. The plant is operating at 10% of the total capacity of 2.5 lakh units per annum with only one shift.